



# Special H1N1 Provider Briefing for Adult Providers

Date: December 10, 2009  
To: All Healthcare Providers  
From: Director of Health, David R. Gifford, MD, MPH  
Re: Information on H1N1 in Rhode Island

**Local Influenza Activity Level:** Widespread<sup>1</sup>; H1N1 predominant circulating strain  
**Rhode Island<sup>2</sup>:** 353 hospitalized cases, 9 deaths  
**Sentinel Surveillance (% of visits due to influenza-like illness)<sup>3</sup>:** Rhode Island: 3.02%, New England Region: 3.3%, Nation: 3.54%

## **H1N1 vaccine for adults with chronic illnesses and young adults**

Starting next week, HEALTH will begin delivering H1N1 vaccine to adult providers enrolled in the H1N1 vaccine program. **Adult providers who have not yet enrolled in the H1N1 vaccine program are strongly encouraged to enroll now so that their high-risk patients can receive the vaccine. The enrollment process will close on Friday, December 11 at 4 p.m.** To enroll, see <http://pandemic.health.ri.gov/h1n1/>.

Enrolled providers who have ordered vaccine should receive their first deliveries by the middle of next week. Through the end of December, HEALTH is asking providers to focus on vaccinating the following high-risk patients:

- Young adults through 24 years of age
- Adults through 64 years of age with chronic illnesses (please see page 2 of this briefing for further definitions of chronic illness)
- Staff members in your practice with direct patient care

Hospital providers may administer this vaccine to their inpatient AND outpatient populations who meet the above criteria. Please note that patients must be fever-free for 24 hours prior to vaccine administration.

## **Conference call for adult vaccine providers**

HEALTH will hold a conference call for adult providers on H1N1 vaccine delivery and usage on Tuesday, December 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 a.m. Providers interested in participating may call 1-888-757-2748 and enter the passcode 546928.

## **Use of live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV)**

The live attenuated H1N1 intranasal vaccine should be administered to all patients for whom it is appropriate. LAIV is approved for adults through 49 years of age who are not pregnant and who do not have certain health conditions. Injectable H1N1 vaccine should continue to be prioritized for patients who cannot receive the intranasal vaccine. Please see the H1N1 LAIV Vaccine Information Statement for a complete list of contraindications to the intranasal vaccine: [http://www.immunize.org/vis/h1n1\\_liveflu.pdf](http://www.immunize.org/vis/h1n1_liveflu.pdf).

## **H1N1 vaccine ordering**

Providers who have already enrolled in the H1N1 vaccine program may make adjustments to their original patient estimates at this time. When reordering H1N1 vaccine, please keep your adult patients through age 64

<sup>1</sup> Rhode Island reported widespread activity for the week of November 29 to December 5, 2009. Percentages of influenza-like illness remain above baseline and influenza lab confirmed cases were reported in over half of the state's 5 regions. For details see <http://www.health.ri.gov/flu/about/surveillance/>.

<sup>2</sup> Confirmed and probable H1N1 hospitalizations and deaths since September 1, 2009

<sup>3</sup> Influenza-like illness activity reported by 27 sentinel surveillance sites from November 22 to November 28, 2009

with underlying medical conditions and your young adult patients through age 24 in mind. Providers will receive an email from HEALTH when an order has been placed on their behalf, so they know when to expect a delivery of vaccine to their offices. There will be no deliveries to private practices during the period between December 24, 2009 and January 3, 2010. HEALTH will only be delivering to hospitals and health centers during that time. Providers who will be unavailable for vaccine delivery outside of that time period or who have questions about order specifications should contact HEALTH at [vaccine@health.ri.gov](mailto:vaccine@health.ri.gov).

Providers who did not complete the vaccine ordering/priority group breakdown step in the H1N1 enrollment process **must do so now**. This step is required to finalize the enrollment process. To enroll in the H1N1 vaccine provider program, edit original enrollment information, or complete a priority group breakdown, see <http://pandemic.health.ri.gov/h1n1/>. For vaccine order assistance, please contact HEALTH at [vaccine@health.ri.gov](mailto:vaccine@health.ri.gov).

### **Reporting doses of H1N1 vaccine administered**

Reporting H1N1 doses administered is a requirement for participation in the vaccine program. All vaccine providers are reminded to submit reports of H1N1 vaccine administered electronically on a weekly basis to HEALTH. HEALTH monitors these reports closely and makes decisions about vaccine allocation, redistribution between practices, and changes in priority groups based on the uptake of vaccine in each of your practices.

**Failure to report administered doses in a timely fashion may result in a delay in further shipments of H1N1 vaccine.** For instructions and to report doses administered, see <http://pandemic.health.ri.gov/h1n1/>.

### **Defining patients with chronic illness**

HEALTH's goal is to vaccinate as many Rhode Island adults with chronic illnesses as possible before the end of this calendar year. We encourage you to reach out to these high-risk patients, as well as to your young adult patients and office staff members, so that they may receive the H1N1 vaccine soon. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), people at high risk for developing complications from influenza include patients with the following chronic medical conditions:

- **Chronic lung disease** (such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and cystic fibrosis)
- **Cardiovascular disease** (such as congenital heart disease, congestive heart failure, and coronary artery disease; does not include hypertension)
- **Kidney disorders**
- **Liver disorders**
- **Neurological and neurodevelopmental disorders** (such as disorders of the brain, spinal cord, peripheral nerve, and muscle such as cerebral palsy, seizure disorders, stroke, mental retardation, moderate to severe developmental delay, muscular dystrophy, or spinal cord injury).
- **Blood disorders** (such as sickle cell disease)
- **Endocrine disorders** (such as diabetes mellitus)
- **Metabolic disorders** (such as inherited metabolic disorders or endocrine disorders)
- **Immunosuppression** due to disease or medications (such as people with HIV/AIDS, cancer, or those on chronic steroids)

Source: <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/highrisk.htm>

### **H1N1 vaccination schedule**

A schedule containing H1N1 vaccine information for different subsets of the population, including groups prioritized for vaccination, is attached to this briefing and available at <http://www.health.ri.gov/news/H1N1Advisories/H1N1FluVaccinationChart.pdf>.

### **Resources**

- HEALTH at <http://www.health.ri.gov>;
- Archived provider briefings and regular news updates: <http://www.health.ri.gov/news/flu/>
- H1N1 Information Line (M-F 8:30am- 4:30pm) 401-222-8022
- H1N1 email address [h1n1@health.ri.gov](mailto:h1n1@health.ri.gov)
- <http://www.flu.gov>